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REPORT ON CONSUMER REACTIONS TO BANNER BUY PROGRAM

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Red was the favorite color among four for placards.

REPORT ON CONSUMER REACTIONS TO BANNER BUY PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted by the Division of Special Surveys, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture for the Office of Food and Feed Conservation, United States Department of Agriculture. It deals with household consumer reactions to the Banner Buy Food Program which was set up by the Office of Food and Feed Conservation in cooperation with local authorities and business men in York and Lancaster Counties, Pa. A comparison report describes a similar survey among retail food merchants. The program took place during the latter half of May and all of June 1948. The interviewing on which this report is based took place during June and July 1948.

The basic purpose of the Banner Food Program was authorized by Public Law 395, 80th Congress. It was to increase consumption of plentiful foods which would reduce the demand for the relatively scarce foods and so tend to ease the inflationary pressures on commodities.

The program designed to meet this basic purpose included the following features -- all of which are appraised in this report or in the report about retailers' reactions to the program:

Foods that were plentiful were listed. These lists were given to local retailers who were asked to feature them as they thought advisable.

When featured, the foods were marked by small placards as banner buys; were sometimes arranged in displays in the store or in the store window; and were sometimes advertised in the newspapers by the stores.

News articles about the campaign and its progress were published in local newspapers. The campaign was also advertised on the radio.

Some grocers distributed a leaflet about the program called "Hello Housewives". At the same time, posters advertising the USDA cookbook "Money-Saving Main Dishes" were placed in the stores and a booklet "Use Plentiful Potatoes" was distributed.

THE SAMPLE

The universe sampled was all urban households in York and Lancaster Counties, Pennsylvania; the total number being approximately 50,000. The sample included 408 households.

There are 12 cities in the 2 counties. The four largest were automatically in the sample because of their size. The remaining eight were put into three strata of about the same size. One town was picked with a probability proportional to its number of dwellings from each stratum. In each of the sample cities a stratified random sample of blocks was selected. In the two largest, York and Lancaster, a sample of addresses in the sample blocks was selected from detailed maps showing structures by type within blocks. In the remaining cities the interviewers listed the addresses in the sample blocks and a random sample was selected from these addresses.

The only additional criterion for inclusion in the sample was that at least one meal a day be prepared in the household.

I. HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS THE BANNER BUY FOOD CAMPAIGN?

--as measured by the proportion of housewives in York and Lancaster Counties who said they heard of it

One-third of the housewives said they had read or heard something about the Banner Buy Food Program.

"Have you read or heard anything about the Banner Buy Food Program?"

	<u>Percent</u>
Heard about program	32
Did not hear	67
Not ascertained	<u>1</u>
Total	100
Number of housewives	408

When shown a poster like those used in the grocery stores during the campaign, a few more housewives said they recognized it, increasing the percentage of women who heard of the campaign from 32 to 36 percent.

Some housewives said they had heard of the campaign, but had no experience with it or knew nothing about it. Judging from their answers to a group of questions ^{1/}, it would appear that only a fifth of the women knew about the existence of the campaign in their own community. The other 15 percent either confused it with some other program, thought it had not yet started or was in some other community than their own, or just had vague memories of having seen a poster like the one shown...but knew nothing more.

^{1/} The questions on which the decisions about the housewives' knowledge of the program were made were chiefly:

"What have you heard about this program?"

"As you understand them, what were the purposes of the Banner Buy Food Program?"

"Do you remember which foods were called 'Banner Buys' or 'Feature Buys?' and the interviewer's comments about her knowledge.

--as measured by the proportion who knew its purposes

Fewer women knew the purposes of the program. Answers to the question "As you understand them, what are the purposes of the Banner Buy Food Program?" are shown along with some illustrations of them in the women's own words:

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Heard of the program and said its purpose was:		36
To encourage sales of surplus or plentiful foods which are cheaper or more economical	11	
"It has shown me to use of the plentiful foods and less of the scarcer foods." "To get rid of the stuff they had too much of on hand. If they had items left over those were the ones marked down." All I can think of is to buy plentiful foods at lower prices."		
To reduce food prices only	8	
"They (banner foods) were to be lower in price to suit the pocketbook..." "To bring down prices of foods..." "To inform people of the cheaper foods..." "For people to buy the cheaper foods."		
To dispose of plentiful or surplus foods	4	
"Acquaint people with excess foods..." "To sell whatever they have the most of..." "It was to move plentiful foods. I don't think it entailed a reduction in price..." "Just pushing over- stocked items."		
Other specific purposes	3	
"Dump old or inferior stocks "Wasn't that to get rid of the cheaper grades of foods in cans?"		
Save food to help Europe "To help people save food so Europe will have some."		
Get housewives to stock up "The way I understand it was to put in a supply at reduced prices."		
Encourage sale of healthful or nutritious foods "It's supposed to help you get the right amount of vitamins, etc."		
General or vague purposes	2	
"Help people in these times with their food problems..."		
"Well, I understand they were talking about saving food. I didn't pay much attention because I always did save food."		
Don't know purposes	2	
Question not asked because of previously demonstrated lack of knowledge about program's existence	6	
Did not hear of the program		63
Not ascertained		1
Total		100
Number of housewives		408

The most prevalent misconception about the Banner Buy Program was that the foods selected for it were supposed to be special-sale, out-rate foods. ^{2/} More than half of the women who said the purpose was to dispose of plentiful foods and reduce prices thought that the saving was supposed to be a direct one, resulting from cuts in the prices of the plentiful banner foods themselves.

"Because of plentiful foods - they don't want them to go to waste - they lower prices."...

is a sample of this kind of response.

Only about a tenth of the women gave the more accurate and knowing explanation of the purpose as an attempt to relieve inflationary pressure on scarce foods with an ultimate goal of price reduction or stabilization.

"To get people to buy the foods that are in season and stay away from higher priced foods so the demand will get less and the prices will eventually come down."...

is a sample of the more accurate statement of the program's purpose.

From answers like: "To try to reduce prices of articles by selling the plentiful foods" it is not possible to determine whether or not the housewife who gives them is thinking of immediate and direct price reductions or long-range objectives. Many answers were similarly framed.

Less prevalent but much more obvious misconceptions about the program are shown in the table on page 3 under the head of "Other specific purposes." In all, the idea of using plentiful or surplus foods was stated as a purpose of the program by only 15 percent of the York and Lancaster urban housewives -- less than half as many as heard of the program.

--as measured by the proportion of housewives who approved of the purpose of the program

Regardless of whether they thought the Banner Food Programs were supposed to cut food prices, promote sales of plentiful foods, teach nutrition to housewives, or just help people with their food problems, a large majority of women who said they had heard of the program approved of the purpose they ascribed to it. There were a few whose antagonism to the program was apparent from their statements of its purpose -- those who said it was just to dump or get rid of inferior or old stocks of food. A few others either qualified their approval or criticized the program but most often this was on the basis of its operation rather than purpose. (See Section III, page 14 of this report for a more complete discussion of York and Lancaster urban housewives' reactions to the idea of food conservation programs.)

^{2/} Many grocers did reduce prices on the foods they selected. (See part 2, "Report on Grocers' Reactions to and Participation in the Banner Buy Program.") Cutting prices of the plentiful foods, however, was not the purpose of the program.

--as measured by the proportions of women who said
the program was successful

Regardless of what a housewife thought was the purpose of the program, she was asked, "Do you think the Banner Food Program has accomplished this?" Among those who were willing to answer either "Yes" or "No" opinion was equally divided about whether or not the program was successful.

Said they:	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Heard of Program and thought that -		36
Program accomplished its purpose	11	
Program did not accomplish its purpose	11	
Undecided or don't know	6	
Stated no purpose for Program	8	
Did not hear of Program		63
Not ascertained		<u>1</u>
Total		100
Number of housewives		408

Among both the women who thought the program was successful and those who thought it wasn't, there were many ways of measuring its success -- ways which varied with the purposes ascribed to the program and with the viewpoints of the women.

Some of the more commonly used measures of accomplishment were:

Amount of publicity for the program

SUCCESSFUL: "Yes, because they are advertising in the papers."
"Yes. I think most people will heed these advertisements."

UNSUCCESSFUL: "Not enough people know about it. There hasn't been enough advertising for people to know the purpose."

Effect of program on food prices

SUCCESSFUL: "I know some products have come down in price.
I think they were under the banner."

UNSUCCESSFUL: "No. This Banner Buy Food Program isn't doing much to keep prices down, as far as I can see."

Personal participation in program

SUCCESSFUL: "I think so. I bought a bushel of apples and canned them."

UNSUCCESSFUL: "Definitely not. At least as far as I'm concerned. I didn't buy any."

Observation of local reaction to program

SUCCESSFUL: "Yes it has. It's gone over quite big in Lancaster.
In fact they held it over a couple of more weeks."

UNSUCCESSFUL: "Not around here--see we don't have it here."
"I don't think it's very popular around here."

Women who thought the program a failure were more likely to give some reason for their opinion than those who thought it successful. In addition to the measures listed above, the explanation that the program was a failure because "a great deal of folks have a disposition to want what they want and to buy that" is mentioned frequently by those who thought it not successful.

--as measured by the proportion of women
who said they bought Bannered Foods.

Only a third of the women who said they knew of the Banner Buy Program -- or 13 percent of all the urban housewives in the two counties -- reported buying any bannered foods.

Women who said they:	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Heard of program and -			36
Bought some Banner Food		13	
Bought food because of the program	3		
Bought food anyway--but increased quantity because of program	4		
Bought food anyway	5		
Didn't remember	1		
Did not buy Banner Food		10	
Didn't remember whether they bought any		7	
Question not asked because of ascertained lack of knowledge		6	
Did not hear of Program			63
Not ascertained			<u>1</u>
Total			100
Number of housewives			408

Less than a tenth of the women said the campaign affected their purchasing--either by inducing them to buy food they would not have bought otherwise or by increasing the quantity of banner foods they bought.

Ten percent of all the women, or more than a fourth of those who had heard of the campaign, said they did not buy any banner foods.

In descending order of mention here are the reasons they gave for not buying under the banner:

- I didn't need, want, or like any of the foods
- I didn't know which foods were bannered
- I didn't know that they had any special prices on these foods
- I thought the quality of the banner buys was poor

What foods were bought under the banner? Thirty-two foods were mentioned by housewives as banner food purchases which they had made during the campaign. Only the following five foods were mentioned by 2 percent or more women: Canned peas, apples, citrus fruit, applesauce, and canned citrus fruit juices.

Actually 13 out of the 32 foods that housewives said they bought as banner buys were never on the list that was drawn up by the Office of Food and Feed Conservation of the USDA, in cooperation with State and local officials. ^{3/}

Among the 13 foods, only the following were mentioned by as much as 1 percent of the housewives: Baked beans (or beans), noodles or macaroni products, and spaghetti.

All together, the 13 foods received a fifth of the mention made of foods bought under the Program. Only two housewives who reported buying banner foods mentioned only foods that were not supposed to be bannered. The others, in giving a list of two or more foods they'd bought, included some that were and some that were not officially chosen for the program.

--as measured by the proportions of women who said the program helped them

Women who said they bought some bannered food were about equally divided on the subject of its helpfulness in general but a majority of them said the banner buys had been good ones for them.

Question 1. "We've talked quite a bit about the Banner Food Program. Do you feel this program has helped you in any way?"

Question 2. "Do you feel the banner buys have been good buys for you?"

	Question 1		Question 2	
	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
Reported that they:				
Bought some bannered foods -		13		13
Agreed with stated question	6		9	
Disagreed with stated question	6		1/	
Don't know or uncertain-	1/		1	
Not ascertained	1/		2	
Did not report buying bannered foods		87		87
Total		100		100
Number of housewives		408		408

1/ Less than one-half of 1 percent

3/ Use of the banner for foods like baked beans, pickles, spaghetti products, and others of their slow-moving items was also reported by grocers.

Reasons given for the program's helpfulness are only two -- it helped save money and it gave nutritional advice. Some of the women who said the program had helped them mentioned limitations or qualifications -- it saved only a very few pennies or it included too few foods or too limited kinds of foods. Those who thought the program did not help them said they made no savings as a result of it, that the foods were not the kind they liked or were of very low quality, or, from a different viewpoint, that the program didn't last long enough to be of help.

Three-fourths of the women who said they heard of the program reported that they read something about it in the newspapers; two-thirds of them mentioned having read some article about it before they were specifically asked about newspapers.

There was no publicity for the program in newsreels. Newsreels were added to the list of media as a way of checking on the memory of the housewives. No one volunteered that she had learned of the programs through the newsreels and, in response to a direct question about them, relatively few said they had seen anything about the program in the movies.

The leaflet called "Hello Housewives", which was to have been used as a give-away by the grocers appears to have been the least effective method of disseminating information about the program. 4/

II. HOW DID WOMEN HEAR ABOUT THE BANNER BUY PROGRAM?

News articles in newspapers appear to have been the most successful way of advertising this program. This was indicated by all three of the measures that were used to ascertain the relative success of different media. The measures were:

First, spontaneous recall by use of the question, "I'd like to ask you how you heard about the Banner Buy Food Program?"

Second, recognition by asking, for each source not already mentioned by the housewife, "What about (the radio, storekeepers, etc.)? Did you hear anything about the Banner Buy Food Program from (it, them, etc.);"

Third, evaluation by asking the women "Which of these do you feel gave you the most information about the Banner Buy Food Program?"

4/ A survey among York and Lancaster County grocers shows that relatively small proportions of them received or distributed this leaflet.

The following table summarizes the responses to the three kinds of questions:

Source	1	1 + 2	3
	Spontaneous recall	Recognition in addition to spontaneous recall	Best Source (Evaluation)
	Percent ^{1/}	Percent ^{1/}	Percent
News articles in newspapers	55	76	43
Posters in stores	32	52	9
Radio	22	39	12
Advertisements in newspapers	20	51	7
Storekeepers	9	16	5
Family or friends	5	16	2
Leaflet called "Hello Housewives"	1	5	1
Newsreels	--	4	1
Other	1	2	2
Not ascertained	9	--	<u>2/18</u> 100

Number of housewives = 147, the number of housewives who said they had heard of the Banner Buy Program

^{1/} Percentages add to more than 100 because some housewives mentioned more than one source.

^{2/} Includes 5 percent who could not choose one best source but mentioned more than one good source; 6 percent who were not asked the question because of demonstrated lack of knowledge about the program; 7 percent who said they didn't know or didn't remember or wouldn't say what was the best source.

Who heard of the program? The better educated and younger women were more likely than those less well educated and older to report that they had heard of the Banner Buy Program.

<u>Knowledge of Program</u>	<u>High-school education</u>		
	<u>None</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>Some</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>Graduate</u> <u>Percent</u>
Heard of the program	29	36	44
Did not hear of the program	70	64	55
Not ascertained	<u>1</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100	100	100
Number of housewives	191	88	128

	<u>Age</u>	
	<u>Under 45</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>45 years</u> <u>or over</u> <u>Percent</u>
Heard of the program	41	29
Did not hear of the program	59	70
Not ascertained	<u>1/</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100	100
Number of housewives	202	206
<u>1/ Less than one-half of 1 percent</u>		

Proportionately more of the younger than of the older women were high-school graduates. As an educated young woman might be expected to read more and get around to the stores more often than a less well-educated and older woman, it is not surprising that she was more likely to have heard of the campaign.

Reactions to the Program's Publicity

A tenth of the women who reported having heard of the program answered "Yes" to the question: "Was there anything about the publicity that you didn't like?" Examination of what it was that they didn't like shows that really only half of these women disliked the publicity. The others either took this opportunity to say what it was they disliked about the program itself, or said that what they disliked was the paucity of publicity.

The comments of all the remaining 5 percent of the women who heard of the program and disliked some aspect of its publicity are reproduced below:

The publicity was confusing, not clear---

"It wasn't clear. The article beat around the bush. It didn't keep me interested enough to go further."

"I didn't get much sense out of the explanation. It wasn't definite enough."

"I didn't think it was too favorable. Then too, it wasn't easily understood."

"...I didn't even think their publicity was too clear."

The publicity was misleading---

"I think it built me up for a letdown. I was disappointed after learning about it. It has not been advantageous for me yet. There were no articles there I really wanted to use for meals -- no variety."

"Yes. They didn't live up to their advertising."

The publicity was dull---

"There wasn't any big flash or anything special to attract or interest people even to read very far in the article. It wasn't written very well..."

The publicity was unfavorable---

"The publicity seemed derogatory. It seemed to poke fun at the program."

Effectiveness of Store Advertising Materials

Of the women who said they had heard of the Banner Buy Program 8 out of 10 said they did some of their own shopping. These women were asked, for each store in which they reported having shopped, whether they had seen any of the posters, banners, or displays used during the campaign. To avoid confusion about whether they had seen it, they were shown samples of each type of display material as the question was asked.

Some women said they shopped in two or more stores. They bought some things at neighborhood grocers, other things in chain or specialty stores. For example, these women might have seen a poster advertising Banner Buys in a chain store but not in a neighborhood grocery. In the following summary table, which shows a total of all positive responses, such women are included among the 46 percent who said they saw the Banner Buy posters inside the store, among the 44 percent who said they saw these posters in the store window, and so on. Although only those who knew of the program and did some of their own shopping were asked the questions about the advertising materials, the table also shows the proportions of all housewives who, it can be estimated, saw the Banner Buy materials.

Women who answered " <u>Yes</u> " to the following questions:	Housewives who knew about program and <u>do own shopping</u>	All Housewives
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
"How about this poster advertising Banner Buys? Did you see it <u>inside the store?</u> "	46	13
"Did you see any <u>large posters</u> like these on the <u>window</u> or outside the store?"	44	12
"Did you see this <u>large poster</u> (advertising recipe book) <u>inside the store?</u> "	37	11
"Did you see any of these <u>little banners</u> inside the store?"	34	10
"Was there any <u>special display</u> <u>inside the store?</u> "	30	9
"Was there any <u>special display</u> in the window about the Banner Buy Food Program?"	22	6
Number of housewives	116	408

Most of the women who saw the little banners reported they saw them easily, a majority said that they were scattered over the store. Only two-fifths said they made a point of looking to see what foods were bannered before they bought.

The following table merely summarizes all positive responses to the questions:

	Women who saw banners	All Housewives
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
"Did you see these little banners easily or did you just happen to notice them by accident?" Percent who said " <u>Saw easily</u> "	80	8
"Were the little banners placed on different food items all over the store, or did the grocer put all the Banner Buys together in one place in the store?" Percent who said " <u>All over the store</u> "	67	6
"Did you make a point of looking to see which food was bannered (or featured) before you bought?" Percent who said " <u>Yes</u> "	41	4
Number of housewives	39	408

Women who saw the store posters, for example, were more likely to see all the other kinds of grocery display materials than those who did not. They were also more likely to say that they looked for the banners when they shopped before making their selection; also they were likely to be the same women who reported buying banner foods.

Effectiveness of Related Advertising

At the same time that the banner food campaign was going on York and Lancaster County grocers advertised a USDA cookbook called "Money Saving Main Dishes". In York County, cards were placed near the poster; housewives could send these into Washington and receive a copy of the cookbook. In Lancaster County the cookbooks themselves were placed near the posters, to be taken. As would be expected, a much higher proportion of Lancaster than of York housewives got copies of the book.

Questions: "Do you ever use a cookbook or recipes in your cooking?"
"Did you happen to get a copy of a recipe book called
'Money Saving Main Dishes'?"

	<u>York County</u>	<u>Lancaster County</u>	<u>All women</u>
Housewives who said they:	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Sometimes use cookbooks or recipes	73	76	75
I got a copy of the cookbook	5	28	17
I did not get a copy of the cookbook	68	48	58
Never use cookbooks or recipes	26	24	24
Not ascertained	<u>1</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100	100	100
Number of housewives	201	207	408

Only 5 percent of the women said they had used any of the recipes. ^{5/} The remaining 12 percent out of the 17 percent who had received recipe books reported they had just read them.

Grocers in both counties also distributed a booklet of potato recipes entitled "Use Plentiful Potatoes". Very few housewives reported having seen this booklet.

Question: "Have you seen a booklet about potatoes - called 'Use Plentiful Potatoes'?"

	<u>Percent</u>
Have seen the booklet	6
Have not seen booklet	91
Not ascertained	3
Total	<u>100</u>
Number of housewives	408

^{5/} The question asked was "Have you had a chance to read anything in this recipe book or use any of the recipes yet?"

So far this report has concerned itself exclusively with the Banner Buy Food Program as it was conducted in York and Lancaster Counties. Because of this, the only people whose opinions have been shown are those of the minority - 36 percent or less - who were informed about the program and its operation. The following section concerns itself with all the York and Lancaster County housewives and deals with their ideas about theoretical food programs, slogans, and advertising materials. Its purpose is to find clues to what kinds of programs are theoretically acceptable to housewives, what kinds of appeals have the most interest for them, and what advertising materials are the most popular among them.

III. WHAT APPEALS WERE APPARENTLY EFFECTIVE?

Housewives were handed slips of paper with the following six statements on them:

1. "Advise people which foods are best buys at today's prices."
2. "Get people to stop wasting food."
3. "Conserve food here to help out people in Europe."
4. "Work out a program to cut food prices."
5. "Get people to buy more surplus foods."
6. "Teach people the right foods to eat for a balanced diet."

The interviewer said "Here are some food programs people have suggested the Government might do something about. I'd like you to look at these and tell me what you think of them." They were then asked, for each of the six programs, what they thought of it and why they felt that way. Finally, after discussing each program individually, they were asked to select the one they considered most important.

The reactions to these programs were desired in terms of Government sponsorship. As Government sponsorship is only one of alternative ways of carrying out such programs, two questions about each program were asked. The first question dealt with the idea of having a program to cut prices, prevent food waste, etc. The second question asked whether or not the Government ought to sponsor such a program.

The purpose of asking this series of questions was not to learn what kind of program the Government ought to sponsor, nor do the results of the questions constitute any sort of recommendation about what kinds of programs ought to be adopted. Rather, they constitute an index of relative acceptability of six appeals which might be made in any program aimed at popular acceptance.

"Cut Food Prices" Said to Have the Greatest Appeal

If York and Lancaster County housewives could have been convinced in the summer of 1948 that a Government food program would reduce food prices it would have gained far more support among them than one they thought had, as its main purpose, any of the other five objectives among which they were asked to select.

Question: "Which of all the ideas on the list do you think should get the most attention from the Government?"

	<u>Percent</u>
Work out a program to cut food prices	50
Get people to stop wasting food	19
Teach people the right foods to eat for a balanced diet	9
Advise people which foods are best buys at today's prices	8
Conserve food here to help out people in Europe	4
Get people to buy more surplus foods	1
Could not choose among them	8
Not ascertained	<u>1</u>
Total	100
Number of housewives	408

Nine out of ten York and Lancaster County housewives said they thought something should be done about high food prices.

Question: "Do you think anything should be done about the price of food?" 1/

	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	92
No	1
Uncertain	6
Not ascertained	<u>1</u>
Total	100
Number of housewives	408

1/ A half-dozen previous questions on the same subject specified high price of food. These questions were among those asked very early in the interview, before the subject of Government sponsored programs was introduced.

Eight out of ten of the interviewed housewives approved of the idea of a Government-initiated program to cut food prices. In interpreting this answer it must be remembered, of course, that the questions were asked in June and July 1948 when food prices were at a peak level.

Questions: "What about the idea of a program to cut food prices?" "How do you feel about that?"

IF APPROVAL EXPRESSED: "Do you think the Government should start such a program?"

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Approved of <u>idea</u>		79	
Approved with qualifications		8)	87
Approved of <u>Government sponsored program</u>	78		
Approved with qualifications	3		
Disapproved	2		
Undecided or don't know	2		
Not ascertained	2		
Disapproved of the idea		3	
Undecided or didn't know		5	
Not ascertained		5	
Total		100	
Number of housewives		408	

There is no evidence that the women who said that they would like a Government program to cut prices have any concept of the implementation which such a program would require, and there were only a few like the housewife quoted below, who spoke in terms of an actual program:

"The ceiling price would be about the best of all programs."

Two-thirds of the women said they approved of the idea of cutting prices thought that the Government could do it. There is evidence in the answers to the question about the Government's ability to reduce food prices, ⁶ that some housewives think of Government as a separate and omnipotent body, which need only give the order and prices would be cut with no difficulty.

"I wouldn't know why not. They are the head of anything else. They can stop prices too."

"Yes, it seems they can do anything else they want to do."

6/ See page 18 for the question and the table derived from it.

"Stop Waste"

A fifth of the women said they would prefer a program to reduce food waste over the other five programs suggested. Many women spoke against wasting food in moral terms. Many criticized the wasteful habits of neighbors, other people, or other groups while protesting that they themselves never wasted food. Some women who opposed waste with an almost religious fervor never were induced to consider it in terms of a program, much less as a Government-sponsored program. In the following table their attitudes are shown in the "not ascertained" category.

Questions: "How do you feel about this next idea - getting people to stop wasting food?"

IF APPROVAL EXPRESSED: "Do you think the Government should start such a program?"

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Approved of <u>idea</u>		70)
Approved with qualifications		1) 71
Approved of <u>Government sponsored program</u>	48	
Approved with qualifications	7	
Disapproved	10	
Undecided or didn't know	3	
Not ascertained	3	
Disapproved of idea		11
Undecided or didn't know		2
Not ascertained		<u>16</u>
Total		100
Number of housewives		408

That the subject of food waste was often approached from the moral rather than the economic or administrative viewpoint is also shown by the decided falling off in the proportions which approved of it when asked about it in terms of a Government program. Seven out of ten said they approved of the idea of getting people to stop wasting food. Only about half, as the table shows, approved of the idea of the Government sponsoring an anti-waste program.

Opponents of waste were also much less optimistic about the possibility of reducing it by means of a Government program than were the opponents of high prices. Two-thirds of the advocates of a price-cutting program thought that the Government could succeed with it. Less than one-third of the advocates of an anti-waste program were similarly optimistic.

Questions: 1) About prices - "Do you think the Government could cut food prices?"

2) About waste - "Do you think such a (Government-sponsored) program would work?"

	Housewives who approved of program to:	
	<u>Reduce prices</u>	<u>Stop Waste</u>
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Government could succeed	65	29
Government could probably succeed	9	11
Government could be partially successful	3	15
Government could probably not succeed	1	8
Government could not succeed	3	16
Uncertain or don't know	12	13
Not ascertained	7	8
Total	100	100
Number of housewives who approved of the program	357	291

"Teach Balanced Diets"

About a tenth of the York and Lancaster County housewives expressed a preference for a nutrition-education program over any of the others. In answers to direct questions about this kind of program, about half said they would approve of the Government's sponsoring it.

Questions: "How about this last idea - teach people the right foods to eat to give a balanced diet. How do you feel about this?"

IF APPROVAL EXPRESSED: "Do you think the Government should do this?"

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Approved of idea		68)	
Approved with qualifications		6)	74
Approved of Government-sponsored program	49		
Approved with qualifications	6		
Disapproved	14		
Uncertain or don't know	2		
Not ascertained	3		
Disapproved of idea		21	
Uncertain or don't know		1	
Not ascertained		4	
Total		100	
Number of housewives		408	

Proponents of this idea said it is good because it is educational or beneficial to health. Opponents said that it is unnecessary because people know what foods to eat to give a balanced diet, or ineffective because people don't care about balanced diets but will go on eating what they want. A few said that balanced diets are too expensive these days, anyway. Finally, about 1 percent of the housewives opposed this and all food programs because they think such programs constitute unwarranted Government interference into the private lives of the people. These people opposed Government action on any of the suggested programs.

As in the discussion of a "Stop Waste Program", there is a decline in approval from the question about the idea of teaching nutrition to the one about Government-sponsorship of such a program. Initially, almost 7 out of 10 approved the idea; only half approved of Government sponsorship.

"Advertise Best Buys"

A program whose main purpose would be to advise people which are the best foods at today's prices received about as many of the first-choice votes as one that would teach people the right foods to eat for a balanced diet.

Questions: "How do you feel about the first one - a program to advise people which are the best buys at today's prices?"

IF APPROVAL EXPRESSED: "Do you think the Government should do this?"

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Approved of idea		70 } 73
Approved with qualifications		3)
Approved of Government-sponsored program	55	
Approved with qualifications	5	
Disapproved	8	
Uncertain or didn't know	4	
Not ascertained	1	
Disapproved of idea		16
Uncertain or didn't know		5
Not ascertained		6
Total		100
Number of housewives		408

The proponents of this program included the nutritionally minded women who think that a best buy at today's price is the healthful food, as well as the bargain hunters who interpret a best buy as the cheapest. The opponents offered much the same reasons that the opponents of an educational program for a balanced diet did -- that the program is unnecessary because women know what the best buys are, or that people wouldn't pay attention to advice, or that such Government programs would involve unwanted interference.

Seven out of ten -- the same proportions that approved of the idea of stopping food waste and teaching people the foods for balanced diets -- approved of the idea of having best buys pointed out. This drops to 55 percent approval when a Government program was mentioned.

"Promote Sales of Surplus Foods"

As a promotional appeal the idea of surplus disposal was, of the six suggested, the least popular. Some of its lack of appeal may be due to inaccuracy necessitated by condensation of the statement, for, when discussed alone, the idea of substituting surplus for scarce foods received as much approval as do most of the other programs.

Questions: "At times there is an oversupply of some foods - what would you think of a program to get people to buy more of these and less of the scarcer foods?"

IF APPROVAL EXPRESSED: "Do you think the Government should start such a program?"

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Approved of <u>idea</u>		54)
Approved with qualifications		22) 76
Approved of Government-sponsored program	55	
Approved with qualifications	5	
Disapproved	9	
Uncertain or don't know	4	
Not ascertained	3	
Disapproved of idea		17
Uncertain or don't know		2
Total		<u>100</u>
Number of housewives		408

Women who approved of a program to promote sales of surplus foods said that such a program would reduce prices, or prevent waste, or alleviate scarcity by giving everyone the chance to get some of the scarce foods. The two qualifications to approval which were mentioned were if the plentiful foods were reduced in price and if they were desirable foods. Reasons given for opposing such a program were similar to those given for opposing the other programs. The only other reason mentioned by a few housewives is really a contradiction of the premise. They said that farmers should not overproduce any foods - or if they do, should be prepared to take the consequent losses.

As many women approved of Government sponsorship of a surplus-disposal program as approved of the idea of such a program. This discussed program and the price cutting one are probably thought of in terms of Government action more frequently than the other three.

"Help Feed Europe

The idea of conserving food in order to be able to help people in Europe received very few first-choice votes -- and created more indecision in independent evaluation than any of the others suggested. Attitudes toward the other programs were rather sharply divided between approval and disapproval -- with few women qualifying their answers to any of the questions. Attitudes toward European aid, however, cannot be nearly so well divided, as the following table shows:

Question: "What do you think of this one - conserving food to help out the people in Europe?"

	<u>Percent</u>
Approved	39
Had reservations	44
Disapproved	14
Undecided	1
Not ascertained	<u>2</u>
Total	100
Number of housewives	408

There appears to be hesitancy about expressing a flat "No" in answer to the question, no matter how opposed people might feel to sending food abroad. Instead of the "NO's", there were answers like these:

"Just to a certain extent -- if they are helping themselves. If not, they shouldn't take food from here. If the food is plentiful I'd say send it. If it's needed here, keep it here."

"Well, not too much. After all, it's just like everything else. Get people to help themselves. If we start, we'll have to keep it up."

"It's all right. They should be taken care of -- especially elderly people and children. But we can't forget our own poor people."

Two approaches to the subject of aid to Europe -- from the viewpoint of the United States and from the viewpoint of Europe were used with almost equal frequency regardless of the attitude toward such a program. Reasons for and against are shown in the following table:

	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u> ^{1/}
REASONS GIVEN FOR APPROVAL		
From United States' viewpoint.....		15
We have plenty, we should share with those who don't.....	11	
Politically logical or expedient - to keep allies or peace.....	3	
We have surpluses, we should send them instead of destroying them.....	1	
From Europe's viewpoint.....		16
Europe needs food - destroyed, hungry.....	16	
RESERVATIONS		
From United States' viewpoint.....		25
Help our own first.....	15	
Send only what we don't need or can't use.....	9	
If it doesn't force our prices up.....	1	
From Europe's viewpoint.....		25
If it is distributed to those who need it, if fairly distributed, etc.....	12	
If they pay for it or work for it; if it would not make them dependent.....	6	
If they need it.....	3	
Only until they can support themselves.....	2	
If they make no profit on it.....	1	
If they don't prepare for war again.....	1	
If they can't produce it themselves.....	<u>2/</u>	
REASONS GIVEN FOR DISAPPROVAL		
From United States' viewpoint.....		8
We need it; sending it creates scarcities.....	3	
We need it; help our own first.....	4	
It would force our prices.....	1	
From Europe's viewpoint.....		8
They are lazy; charity would make them dependent	4	
They don't need food.....	1	
They wouldn't help us.....	1	
Other - don't feed them to fight again; Europe doesn't appreciate aid; Europe can feed herself.....	2	

^{1/} Percentages in this table do not add to 100. It is a table of reasons given, only.

^{2/} Less than one-half of 1 percent.

Women who reported they had heard of the Banner Buy Program tended to be a little more favorably disposed toward the idea of Government food conservation programs than those who did not.

	Heard of Banner Buy Program <u>Percent</u>	Did not hear <u>Percent</u>	All women <u>Percent</u>
Women who approved of Government sponsorship of stated program ^{1/}			
Cut food prices	89	87	87
Teach balanced diet	85	72	74
Promote sale of plentiful foods	80	74	76
Advise about best buys	76	71	73
Stop waste of food	73	71	71
Percent who approved of:			
Conservation of food to aid Europe	43	37	39
Number of housewives	147	258	408

^{1/} Includes those who qualified their approval

IV. WHAT ADVERTISING MATERIALS WERE POPULAR?

In addition to the questions about the theoretical desirability of this or that kind of food conservation program, housewives were asked to rate some slogans and placards that were used in, or proposed for, the campaign.

Slogans:

Eight out of ten said that the slogan "Save food - fight inflation" is all right. ^{7/}

One out of ten said it isn't a good slogan and one out of ten is "not ascertained" for reasons that will be described.

The high rate of expressed approval of the slogan is not so significant as it might appear. In the first place, there is evidence that much of the response is not to the slogan as a whole, or even to the slogan at all, but merely to the idea of "Save Food". Here are a few samples of answers which convey this impression.

"That's all right. I believe in saving food."

"That's a good idea. You should always save food, regardless."

"That's all right. They shouldn't buy more than what they really have to have."

^{7/} The question asked was: "On this poster I've shown you there is a saying - 'Save Food - Fight Inflation'. What do you think of that saying?"

In the second place there is evidence that the word "inflation" is not always understood - which might partly explain why so many responded only to the idea of saving food. A few who were included among the 10 percent whose opinions of the slogan were not ascertained said "I don't quite understand what it means." Others said:

"I don't know. I couldn't say about the inflation. I can't imagine wasting food."

One of the women who said the slogan is all right went on to criticize it;

"I think it's very good but a lot of people today do not know what the word inflation means. I think it would be better to say 'save money'. It would be easier for the ordinary person to understand."

Ten slogans, in addition to the one used during the campaign, were shown to the housewives and they were asked to choose their favorite as well as the one they liked least.

One-fourth of the women preferred "Be Wise - Save Food - Save Money" over any of the other slogans. It received the largest share of first votes.

Question: "Here is a card with several different slogans on it. I'd like you to look at it and tell me which one you like best?" "And which one do you like least?"

<u>Slogans</u> ^{8/}	<u>Like best</u> <u>Percent</u>	<u>Like least</u> <u>Percent</u>
Be Wise...Save Food...Save Money-----	24	3
MORE for your Dollar-----	22	4
Helps you Save - Helps Others Live-----	17	2
Insures Health - Assures Thrift-----	8	3
Eat Better for Less-----	8	10
Cut Your Food Costs-----	6	3
Food Fights for Democracy-----	5	8
Your Guide to Food Savings-----	3	5
Eat a Hearty Meal-----	2	27
Eat More - Save More-----	1	24
Cannot choose among them-----	4	11
Total-----	100	100
Number of housewives-----		408

^{8/} The order in which the slogans were printed was reversed on half of the cards...order of printing did not affect choice of slogans.

Housewives' comments do not indicate why the slogan "Be Wise...Save Food... Save Money" is the most popular. The simple wording and obviously connected ideas may be the reason. Their comments about the slogans they least like offer some indication about why these were rejected. About "Eat a Hearty Meal" there were two kinds of comments: "We are trying to save food and you can't do it that way"; and "How can you do that at today's prices?" About "Eat more - Save More"... that's impossible.

Placards

Small placards were used during the campaign to identify the banner foods on the grocer's shelves. These placards or banners were printed in red on white paper. Other banners were made up (but not used) in the following colors: red and blue combined, green and blue. From among these the women were asked to select the color they liked best and the one they liked least.

Red was most frequently selected as the favorite:

Questions: "Here is the little banner that was placed over certain food items in the stores. We have it in several colors and would like to know which one you like best?" "And which one do you like least?"

<u>Color of banner</u>	<u>Like best</u>	<u>Like least</u>
Red.....	47	15
Blue.....	12	36
Green.....	18	38
Red and Blue.....	21	5
Cannot choose.....	2	5
Not ascertained.....	--	<u>1</u>
Total.....	100	100
Number of housewives...	408	

